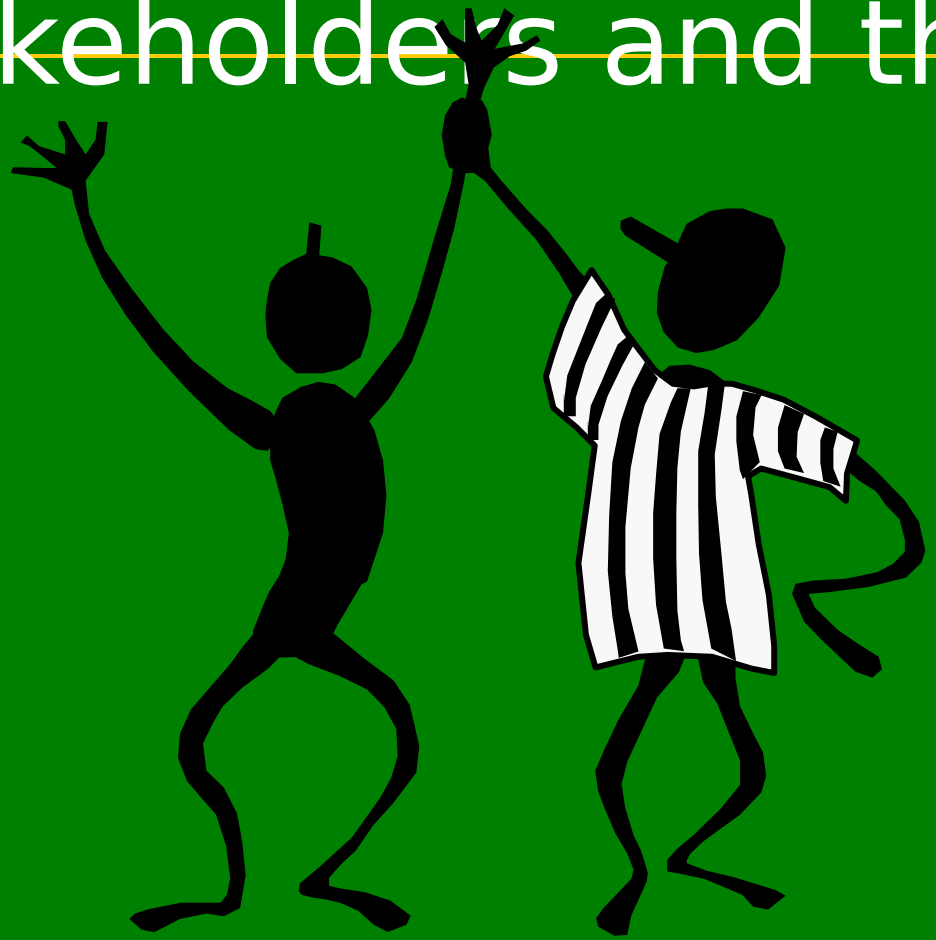
# Engaging and Involving Key Stakeholders and the Public



Lisa Knerr, Tetra Tech, Inc.

# What is public involvement?

1. Seeking public input before program is finalized
2. Getting the public involved in implementation

# Why is it necessary?

- Ensures that community concerns are factored into the decisions made
- Shares the responsibility of the decision
- Generates greater public support of the program
- Puts the implementation of the decision into the hands of the community
- Provides a conduit to other parts of the stormwater program

# What EPA Wants

- Comply with applicable State, Tribal, and local public notice requirements
- Determine the appropriate best management practices (BMPs) and measurable goals
- Include the public in developing, implementing, and reviewing the stormwater management programs
- Make every effort to reach out and engage all economic and ethnic groups

# EPA suggestions for advertising

- Know the audience and think creatively about how to gain its attention and interest.
- Traditional methods (advertising in local newspapers) of soliciting public input are not always successful
  - Many sectors of the population do not read the local press
  - Audience reached may be limited

# EPA suggestions for advertising

- Alternative advertising methods should be used whenever possible
  - Radio or television spots
  - Postings at bus or subway stops
  - Announcements in neighborhood newsletters
  - Announcements at civic organization meetings
  - Mass mailings of flyers
  - Door-to-door visits
  - Telephone notifications
  - Multilingual announcements

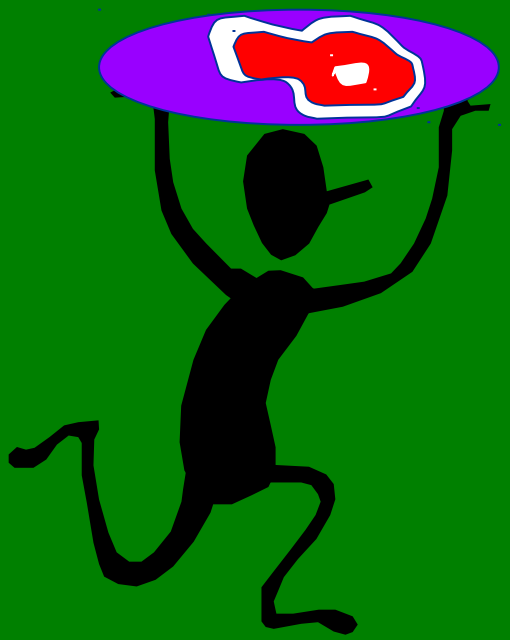
# EPA Suggestions for Public Involvement

- ***Public meetings/citizen panels*** allow citizens to discuss various viewpoints and provide input concerning appropriate storm water management policies and BMPs
- ***Volunteer water quality monitoring*** gives citizens firsthand knowledge of the quality of local water bodies and provides a cost-effective means of collecting water quality data
- ***Volunteer educators/speakers*** who can conduct workshops, encourage public participation, and staff special events

# More EPA Suggestions

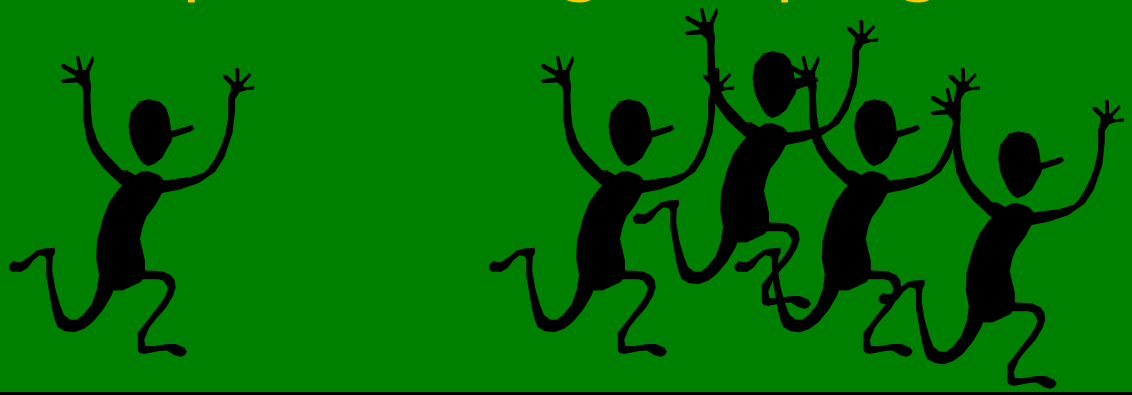
- ***Storm drain stenciling*** is an important and simple activity that concerned citizens, especially students, can do
- ***Community clean-ups*** along local waterways and around storm drains
- ***Citizen watch groups*** can aid local enforcement authorities in the identification of polluters
- ***"Adopt A Storm Drain" programs*** encourage individuals or groups to keep storm drains free of debris and to monitor what is entering local waterways through storm drains

# What is a steak holder?



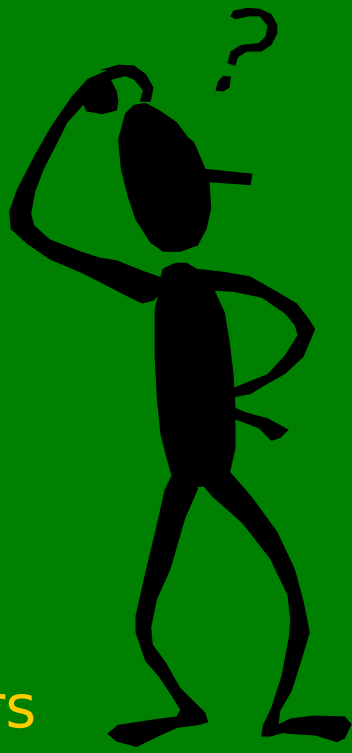
# What is a stakeholder?

- A group or individual who:
  - has the responsibility for implementing the program.
  - is affected by the program.
  - has the ability to impede or assist in implementing the program.



# Identify stakeholders

- Key business groups
  - developers, local businesses, industry
- Regulators
  - federal, state, and local representatives
- Community organizations
  - fishing clubs, nature societies, preservation groups, League of Women Voters, PTA
- Community residents
  - riparian landowners, dog owners, seniors



# Informing stakeholders of formal public meetings and/or volunteer opportunities

- Public notice (THIS SHOULD NOT BE YOUR ONLY ADVERTISING!)
- Newspaper inserts and articles
- Newsletters
- Web sites
- Word-of-mouth
- Watershed groups
- Other nonprofit groups
- Professional organizations

East Fork
WATERSHED COLLABORATIVE

# Come Grill Us About Your Watershed

## Stakeholder Meeting and Cookout

East Fork of the Little Miami River Watershed

Pattison Park Lodge
2228 US 50, Owensville, Ohio
**Thursday, August 2 , 2001**
**5-7:30 p.m.**
(Come early for the cookout!)

# Other ways to seek stakeholder input or volunteers

- Community forums or open houses (informal)
- Post card survey (self mailer)
- Telephone survey
- Survey card on newspaper insert
- Focus groups
- Stakeholder groups or advisory committees

# When inviting stakeholders to the table…

- Strive for balanced representation
- Be inclusive
  - Don’t overlook the difficult people
- Look to associations to increase representation (i.e., Sierra Club, NAHB)
- Provide background information on the project

# Running a meeting

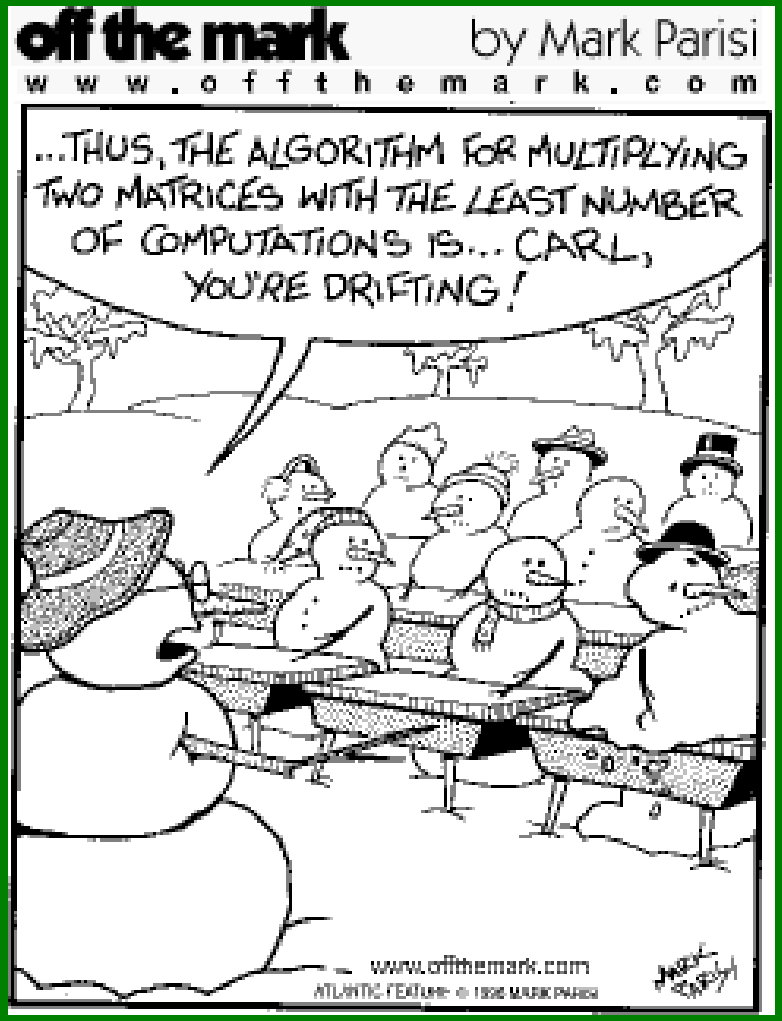
- This is your opportunity to learn about your stakeholders and possible your future volunteers!!
- The facilitator
  - Helps focus on the task at hand
  - Ensures that everyone feels heard on the issues of concern to them
    - Maximize participation
  - Defends others from personal attack
  - Makes suggestions on how to proceed
  - Builds agreement among participants

# The Facilitator should

- Introduce the facilitator, the note taker, and the sponsors
- Have stakeholders introduce themselves (If possible)
  - Have them voice their expectations
- Give brief summary info on the issues
- Provide gentle guidance
- Ask for their vision; let them lead
- Don’t railroad or force issues
- Talk a little; listen a lot . . . .
  - Listen with respect (ask why)

# Dealing with Distracting Behaviors

- Make eye contact
- Walk up to them
- Ask “What do you think?”
- Give feedback at a break


off the mark
by Mark Parisi
www.offthemark.com
...THUS, THE ALGORITHM FOR MULTIPLYING TWO MATRICES WITH THE LEAST NUMBER OF COMPUTATIONS IS... CARL, YOU'RE DRIFTING!
www.offthemark.com

# Resolving Conflict

- Up front venting
- Need vs. position
- Turn the negative into a positive
- Separate beliefs from facts
- Focus on common goals

# Tips for working with stakeholders and volunteers

- Strong leadership
- Organization
- Give praise
- Develop background/ educational materials
- Meetings
  - Meet only when it’s necessary
  - Start and end meetings on time
  - Piggyback onto other efforts
  - Bring food
  - Write meeting summary with “action items”

# Use Other Groups

- Partner with an existing group
  - Organized, ready-made stakeholders, communication, volunteer activities, etc.
  - Youth orgs (scouts, AmeriCorps), environmental orgs, watershed associations, recreational clubs

# Measurable Goals

- **BMP**: Establish a NPDES stormwater steering committee

- **Measurable Goal**: The NPDES Stormwater Steering committee is established at least 6 months before the NOI is submitted and meets quarterly before and during the permit term. Membership includes representatives from the City, public, industrial and commercial groups, and construction/developer groups.

# Measurable Goals

- **BMP**: Hold public meetings to receive input on the proposed program
- **Measurable goal**: Three public meetings will be held on the City's proposed storm water management program before it is finalized.

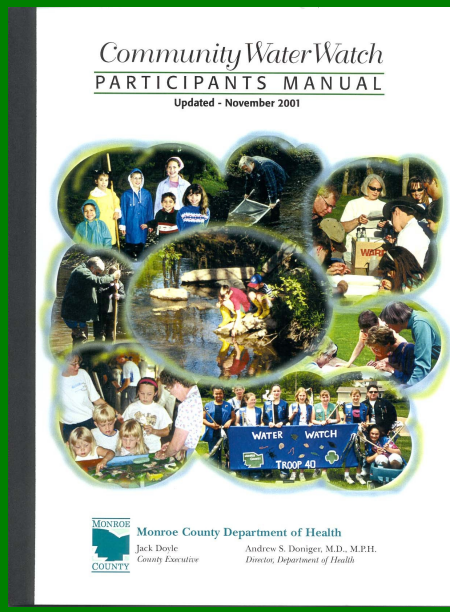
# Measurable Goals

- **BMP**: Start a citizen monitoring program

- **Measurable Goal**: Advertise the program through the local newspaper and interested organizations. Hire a full-time volunteer coordinator. Create educational materials. Involve 50 citizens by the end of year 2.

# Monroe County Community WaterWatch

- Stormwater coalition monitors the large waterbodies, citizens monitor the smaller waterbodies
- 5-member team adopts a ½-mile stream segment for 2 years
- 4 times/year
  - Monitor temp., velocity, critters
  - Conduct visual survey
  - Submit data
- Once in the 2-year commitment
  - Education and outreach activity in watershed



# Clean Water Business Partners

- Provides incentives to carpet cleaners, landscapers, and mobile pressure washers to promote awareness of clean water to their customers while implementing BMPs.
- Ask business to pass out brochure Brochures includes customer surv Those who respond enter drawing for free carpet cleaning.
- www.sacstormwater.org/cwbp/cwbp.htm

# Working With the News Media

- Highly visible communication format
  - Advertise stakeholder meetings
  - Enlist public comment on proposed stormwater program
  - Promote voluntary programs
  - Cover volunteer events

***"Never pick a fight with anyone who buys their ink by the barrel"*** **-Tommy Lasorda**

# News stories vs. paid advertisements

- “Free publicity”
- Perceived by consumers to be more credible than advertising
- People are more likely to share an article with
  - Family
  - Friends
  - Colleagues

# Limitations of news stories

- An uncontrolled method of placing messages in the media
  - Does not offer the same promised result as a paid advertisement
  - Presents journalists with story ideas via pitches / news releases

Who are the news media in your municipality?

Do you know your local news outlets and

# Tips For Attracting News Coverage

- Strategically target message to appropriate contact
- Research target publications – Find out:
  - What they like to cover
  - What they have covered in the past
  - How they prefer to receive information
- Your event will get more coverage if it:
  - Shows Action
  - Uses “kids and puppies”
  - Uses the “Big Tie-in” principle
    - Affects locals

# Tips For Attracting News Coverage

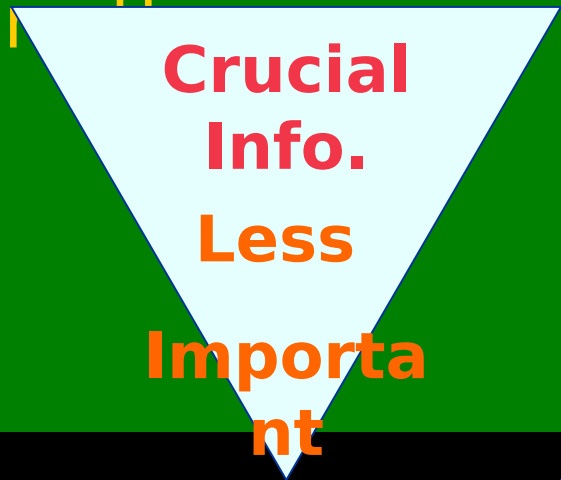
- Make it do-able for the media
  - Distance, time of day, etc.
- Make appointment with reporter for a quick “Meet & Greet”
  - Good way to put names & faces together
- Be Flexible
  - Modify your news release to meet their needs

# Writing News Releases

- Be sure your subject is newsworthy and will advance your objectives
  - The more unique your story the better
- Create a headline that will catch the media's attention
  - Use smaller sub-head to include secondary information
- The first paragraph should summarize your message (what you want to say) and include a date line

# Writing News Releases

- Include information by level of importance
  - Most important information should be provided first
- Write in the present tense and use action verbs
- Write clearly and concisely
- Answer all the logical questions a release is likely to raise
  - Who, what, when, why, where



# Writing News Releases

- Include a quote from the department head/program coordinator
- Include statistics and attribute the announcement to an official source (when possible)
- Keep length of release to one page, if possible
  - No longer than 2 pages
- Be sure to include contact information
  - Name, phone number and email address

# Writing News Releases

- Include departmental boilerplate at the end of the release
  - Standard paragraph about your department/stormwater program
- Include photography or a link to downloadable image (when possible)
- Always check information for accuracy and spelling!
- Make sure contact/spokesperson is available upon distribution of the release

# Writing News Releases

- Distribute the release only after you have obtained all the necessary approvals
  - Includes approvals from all partners in the stormwater program
  - 4-5 days ahead of event, etc.
- Post the release on your Web site (if applicable)
- Follow up release with phone call

# Tips for working with reporters

- Establish a relationship beforehand
- Return calls, respect deadlines
- Be open and accessible
- Provide appropriate background info
- Provide feedback on coverage
- Don’t play favorites

# Final Tip for Attracting News Coverage

**If at first you don’t succeed, try, try again**